

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 10, 2021

General Daniel R. Hokanson
Chief of the National Guard Bureau
U.S. National Guard Bureau
111 S. George Mason Dr.
Arlington, VA. 22204

Major General Timothy J. LaBarge
Commander, New York Air National Guard
NY National Guard Joint Force Headquarters
330 Old Niskayuna Road
Latham, NY 12110

Dear General Hokanson and Major General LaBarge,

We write regarding the long-delayed processing of the Airport Joint Use Agreement (AJUA) between the Syracuse Regional Airport Authority (SYR) and the 174th Attack Wing of the New York National Guard. As you know, the approval process, which involves several entities at both the state and federal level, began in December of 2020. At that time, SYR was told that the process should take around one month. The process is now in its ninth month, and the timeline for completion is unclear.

Any process involving multiple entities can be difficult to coordinate, but the delays in this process have long surpassed reasonable bounds, and they have had real and growing negative effects. SYR is now owed more than \$2 million in back rent for the use of its property and the amount is increasing each quarter. Because of the excessive delay, the airport has not been able to account for these quarterly payments, significantly distorting its budget process, and thwarting its long-term planning. The longer this process drags on, chances grow that the airport will need to plug this gap in its finances by raising landing fees or other charges, which would in turn harm SYR's ability to attract new carriers and routes.

The partnership between SYR and the 174th Attack Wing is extremely valuable for New Yorkers and all Americans. It supports vital training exercises and has helped turn Central New York into a nationally recognized model for drone integration and research. This work must continue unabated, and we heartily support this partnership. For all these reasons, we ask that all involved with this process at the National Guard Bureau and the New York Air National Guard do their part to ensure that it is completed in as timely a manner as possible. Additionally, as the process continues, we ask that all inquiries from SYR, or from this letter's signers and their staff regarding the status of the AJUA, are answered as quickly and comprehensively as possible.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. If you have any questions, please reach out to Tristan Southard (Tristan.Southard@mail.house.gov) on Rep. Katko's staff.

Sincerely,



John Katko
Member of Congress



Elise M. Stefanik
Member of Congress



Tom Reed
Member of Congress

CC: Major Francisco Jimenez, National Guard Bureau
Robert Conway, New York Division of Military and Naval Affairs
Renee Davin, New York Air National Guard
Colonel Charles Hutson, New York Air National Guard
Major David Livesay, 174th Attack Wing
Colonel William McCrink, 174th Attack Wing
Colonel Kristopher Geis, New York National Guard